

A new *Nassarius* (Gastropoda : Mollusca) species from Golfo de Chiriquí, southwestern Panamá.

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ABSTRACT. A new deep-water gastropod species from Golfo de Chiriquí, southwestern Panamá, assigned to the family Nassariidae, is described and compared with its closest relatives : *Nassarius harryleei* n. sp. is compared with *Nassarius exsarcus* (Dall, 1908), *N. gemmulosus* (C. B. Adams, 1852), *N. limacinus* (Dall, 1917), and *N. onchodes* (Dall, 1917).

INTRODUCTION. Although the Pacific coast of Mexico, and particularly the Gulf of California, has regularly had collecting expeditions in pursuit of a better knowledge of its molluscan fauna, the rest of Middle America has not received the same attention, due mainly to the difficulties presented in mounting such expeditions. Certainly, this is the case of the Golfo de Chiriquí area, located in the southwestern coast of Panamá. A closer inspection of southern Panamá in recent years has produced such unexpected finding as *Phalium pilsbryi* (Woodring & Olsson, 1957) [García & Marr, 1998], *Serpulorbis oryzata* (Mörch, 1862) [García, 1999], *Oliva foxi* Singley, 1984 [Kaiser, 1999], *Cancellaria (Euclia) laurettae* Petit & Harasewych, 1998, and *Columbella marrae* (García, 1999).

During a 1998 visit to Mr. James Ernest, the well-known Panamanian collector, the author had the opportunity to look through Mr. Ernest's collection with the help of his assistant, Mr. Rafael Castillo. Mr. Castillo directed the author to a number of small species that had been collected in Golfo de Chiriquí. Among them was a new species of *Nassarius* described herein.

Abbreviations of repository institutions

BMSM : The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, Sanibel, Florida, USA.

LACM : The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, California, USA.

MNH : Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France.

SBMNH : Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, California, USA.

UF : The University of Florida Natural History Museum, Gainesville, Florida, USA.

SYSTEMATICS

Superfamily MURICOIDEA Rafinesque, 1815

Family Nassariidae Iredale, 1916

Genus *Nassarius* Duméril, 1806

Nassarius harryleei n.sp.

Figs 1-7

Description.

Shell very small, up to 4 mm in length, white, solid. Protoconch of 3.5 white, smooth, convex whorls (Fig. 3); first whorl tiny, increasing very rapidly in width and height. Teleoconch of 3.25 whorls, earlier whorls flat, last whorl angled at periphery; sculptured with sharp, widely spaced axial ribs, 12 on penultimate whorl, axial ribs with nodules at either end, ribs terminating at top of dorsum of last whorl, evanescent basically. Spiral sculpture of incised lines at either side of nodules, forming a presutural and postsutural band; presutural band continuing to aperture, postsutural band continuing at periphery of last whorl and disappearing at top of dorsum; basal sculpture of about eight conspicuous spiral ribs, ribs with nodules reflecting earlier axial ribs, nodules evanescent basically. Sutures deep, crenulated. Aperture small, 1/3 length of shell, outer lip double variced, with one large denticle within, three or four other denticles may be present anteriorly, or may appear only as lirae. Columellar callus smooth, very narrow, somewhat elevated, with large denticle posteriorly, denticle delineating the relatively wide anal canal. Siphonal canal very wide; siphonal fasciole practically absent.

Type material.

Holotype (LACM) length 3.8 mm, width 2.1 mm (Figs. 1 & 3). Paratype A (LACM) length 3.9 mm, width 2.3 mm (Fig. 2). Paratype B (MNHN) length 3.8 mm, width 2.4 mm (Fig. 4). Paratype C (UF) length 4.0 mm, width 2.5 mm (Fig. 5). Paratype D (SMSM) length 4.0 mm, width 2.3 mm (Fig. 6). Paratype E (SBMNH) length 3.8 mm, width 2.1 mm (Fig. 7).

Three unfigured paratypes, one specimen each, are in the collections of the author (#22586), Dr. Harry G. Lee, and Mr. O.K. McCausland.

Type locality.

Golfo de Chiriquí, southwestern Panamá, in 270-360 meters in muddy bottom.

Distribution.

Known only from the type locality.

Etymology.

Named for Dr. Harry G. Lee, of Jacksonville, Florida in recognition of his many years of dedication to the study of Western Atlantic micromollusks, and his unreserved willingness to share his knowledge with others.

Discussion.

The denticular formation inside the aperture and the double varix of the outer lip of *Nassarius harryleei* n. sp., leave no doubt that the specimens studied are fully mature. The new species is the smallest of some 30 species of *Nassarius* inhabiting the Panamic Province. Of the smaller species, four measure less than 10 mm: *Nassarius exsarcus* (Dall, 1908), endemic to the Galápagos Islands, grows to 9 mm in length, is brownish in color, has a turreted shape with shouldered whorls, axial ribs which are overridden by numerous spiral threads, and one anterior fold in the columella. *Nassarius gemmulosus* (C. B. Adams, 1852) grows to 7.9 mm in length, is covered with spiral rows of nodules, has a brown band at the suture and at the base, has 2 or 3

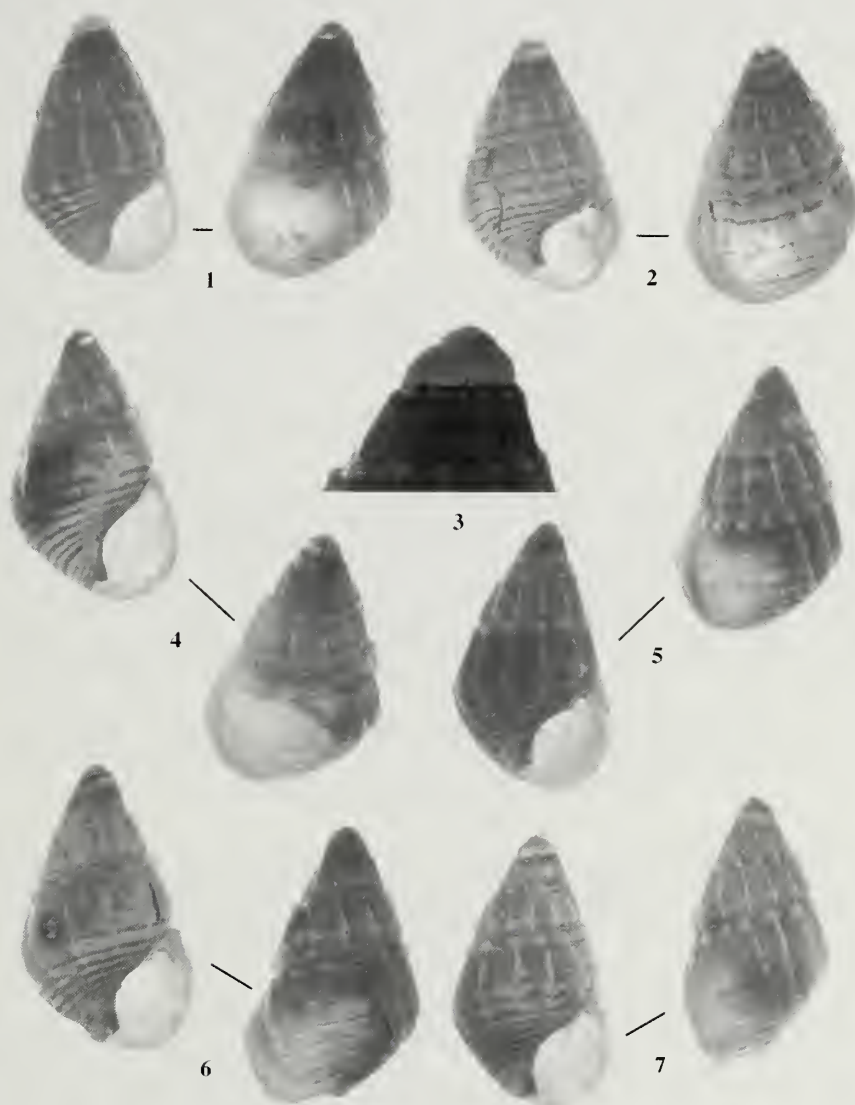
small denticles at the base of the columella, and an outer lip with 5 denticles. *Nassarius limacinus* (Dall, 1917), an intertidal species known only from the Gulf of California, grows to 5.3 mm in length, has a glassy, yellowish shell with brownish flecks, low, rounded ribs, and strong spiral cords on spire and upper body whorl. *Nassarius onchodes* (Dall, 1917) grows to 6 mm in length, has a channeled suture, a swollen shell with a reticulated sculpture, and 7 to 8 denticles inside the outer lip.

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**Figures.**

Nassarius harryleei n.sp.

Fig. 1. Holotype (LACM) (length: 3.8 mm, width: 2.1 mm). Fig. 2. Paratype A (LACM) (length: 3.9 mm, width: 2.3 mm). Fig. 3. Protoconch of holotype. Fig. 4. Paratype B (MNHN) (length: 3.8 mm, width: 2.4 mm). Fig. 5. Paratype C (UF) (length: 4.0 mm, width: 2.5 mm). Fig. 6. Paratype D (BMSM) (length: 4.0 mm, width: 2.3 mm). Fig. 7. Paratype E (SBMNH) (length: 3.8 mm, width: 2.1 mm).